



SAINT MARK'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

2017-2019

STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction

The Strategic Visioning Task Force met from June–October, 2016. Task force members included Chair and Senior Warden Lynne Markova, Dean Steve Thomason, Junior Warden Cara Peterson, Canon Maria Coldwell, Seyi Akanni, Clara Berg, Kathy Elkins, Michael Garrett, Re Knack, Karen Knutson, and Joe Wright. Before convening the Strategic Planning Committee, the Dean, Wardens, and Vestry discussed its scope. They determined that the Mission, Vision and Values that had been developed for the 2013 plan were still applicable. This version of the Strategic Plan, therefore, would focus on updating the Strategic Goals only.

As with the previous Strategic Plan, committee members gathered input from the various active ministries and committees at Saint Mark's over the summer months. Two congregational forums were held in September 2016 and an online survey was developed to gather input and the initial plan was drafted. The Vestry reviewed the first draft at its November 2016 meeting. The final draft of the plan was approved by the Vestry on December 20, 2016. In writing the plan, the Task Force consciously chose to preserve the original wording of comments and

suggestions, so that readers may hear the voices of various contributors to the plan. The level of detail that was collected, however, was much higher than we could include, with significant overlap on many key points. All of the comments recorded at various meetings and forums are preserved in individual reports posted on the Saint Mark's web site Strategic Visioning page. The various groups are encouraged to use this information, in addition to the Strategic Plan itself, as planning tools for their groups.

The Strategic Plan is organized into five major sections, corresponding to the five major ministry areas at Saint Marks (Prayer, Worship, Faith Formation, Justice, and Community Life). The goal for plan implementation is, however, that all members of the congregation will familiarize themselves with entire Plan and recognize how their area(s) of interest relates to other areas.

Due to the level of activity at Saint Mark's, the Task Force hopes that the Vestry will review and reflect on the Strategic Plan on a regular basis perhaps once per year, revising it as necessary, so that it always remains current.

VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND MAJOR GOALS

WHO WE ARE

Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral strives to be:

- A house of prayer for all people, where we worship God and proclaim the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ
- A loving, welcoming, inclusive community that nurtures faith, encourages service, and integrates social and environmental justice into our lives
- A sacred gathering place for the Diocese of Olympia and the broader community in times of crisis, sorrow, and celebration

WHAT WE DO

- We gather in prayer to experience God and to seek spiritual renewal and direction
- We offer diverse worship services that engage people through liturgy, spoken word, and music
- We create faith formation opportunities that invite people to grow, wherever they are on their journey of faith
- We build a vibrant community life by sharing our stories and nurturing our relationships
- We practice Christ's message of justice in all our ministries through service to others

Our spiritual practices include:

daily prayer
weekly worship regular
study serving others
taking Sabbath time for renewal practicing
hospitality to all
generous, joyful giving from what we have been given

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Welcome—We invite people of all faiths and cultures to share this house of prayer.

Inspire—We are inspired by the light of Christ and are fed by the deep springs of the Spirit.

Transform—We seek to be transformed by love and to share this love generously with others.

Serve—We serve the poor and those in need, we engage in the work of justice at home and abroad, and we seek to be good stewards of the earth.

WHERE WE WANT TO GO:

- Create more opportunities to nurture our spirituality through prayer and worship
- Enhance efforts to integrate new members and more fully engage existing members in our community life
- Renovate and upgrade our facilities to preserve them for the future, improve accessibility and sustainability, and support the ministries of the cathedral
- Increase staff, both clergy and lay, to address our growing pastoral care and ministry needs
- Improve cathedral communications to better share the many facets of our ministries with each other, the diocese, and the world
- Develop a strong linkage between the cathedral and the congregations of the diocese, to act on our role as the cathedral church of the diocese.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Divided into five main sections: Prayer, Worship & Music, Faith Formation, Justice, and Community Life

PRAYER

- Live into our stated goal for being a center of prayer and thanksgiving during times of crisis, sorrow, and celebration.
- Continue providing prayerful support for parishioners through such programs as the Quilt Ministry, Prayer Chain, and Caring Card ministries.
- Continue efforts towards establishing one or more permanent Labyrinths on site.
- Provide new and support existing opportunities for prayer and contemplation, including increased Daily Office offerings.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

- Maintain high level of quality in liturgy and sermons, especially during construction.
- Continue to focus on our core identities of music and worship.
- Integrate and involve children and youth in worship leadership in liturgies.
- Continue excellence in preaching, with a full complement of voices.
- Welcome and integrate new, diverse worship leaders on an ongoing basis.
- Continue building an ongoing partnership with the Compline leadership and choir.
- Support intentional, focused liturgical participation from congregation and liturgical ministers.
- Expand budgets for choir and choir school. Support, develop, and grow intergenerational music opportunities. Continue growing excellence in music.
- Explore potential new, diverse liturgical opportunities.
- Re-visit Sunday service times to allow for more spacious and expansive gathering dynamics.

FAITH FORMATION

- Support initial Wisdom School offerings and program expansion.
- Continue, support, and grow the Children's and Youth ministries, such as the Youth Group, Children's Chapel and Godly Play.
- Integrate new members into Saint Mark's and increase congregational theological awareness through Inquirer's classes.

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FAITH FORMATION (CONTINUED)

- Provide pastoral care formation and training opportunities.
- Offer and invite participation in liturgical training opportunities.
- Expand and grow the Wednesday night Cathedral Commons offerings.
- Develop intentional faith formation structure and long-range plan.
- Increase intergenerational opportunities for personal spiritual development that speak to both head and heart.
- Encourage all ministries to welcome and incorporate youth.
- Provide support and affirmation for parents; skill-based offerings, community.
- Continue pastoral/education/faith formation offerings that “get us outside of our heads” and help us grow as a community.

JUSTICE

- Focus on Evangelism, racial reconciliation, and stewardship of creation in alignment with the national church’s goals.
- Continue to be a prophetic, Christ-centered voice for justice and a model for civil discourse and disagreement.
- Conduct listening exercises and provide justices offerings with Muslim, African-African, and other communities. Explore partnerships with temples, mosques and other interfaith organizations.
- Engage in open, frank discussions of racism and racial justice issues.
- Explore opportunities to expand and sustain Noel House, including a designated ministry space.
- Work with the community to address homelessness & hunger, including potential outreach to those living in our vicinity.
- Expand justice ministry outreach and collaboration to the larger community.
- Explore continued sustainability opportunities, such as the Urban Garden, the apiary, the greenbelt, carbon footprint reduction, and other sustainable practices.
- Improve internal and external collaboration, communication, and efficiencies between justice ministries.
- Continue addressing the needs of the LGBTQ community.
- Provide support for the *Renewing Our Covenant: A Statement of Commitment and Action* position statement (see Appendix).

COMMUNITY LIFE

Divided into seven subsections: General Community Life, Stewardship, Communications, Finance, Hospitality, Pastoral Care, and Facilities

GENERAL COMMUNITY LIFE

- Expand the clergy team.
- Catalog the talents and skills of the parishioners to tap for help when needed.
- Encourage and recruit people into ministry leadership; provide resources, training and toolkits; explore succession planning.
- Grow into our role as a Cathedral and faith community for the City of Seattle, the Diocese of Olympia, and the Capitol Hill community.
- Include both traditional and non-traditional families (singles of all ages, elders, etc.) in ministry planning activities.
- Offer shorter-term, immediate projects and shorter terms for committees.
- Continue sponsoring and growing Cathedral Day.
- Explore opportunities for additional Diocesan collaboration and outreach.
- Continue the pilot of the Seattle Service Corps and explore potential opportunities for growth and expansion.
- Determine new methods for engaging and integrating shifting demographics and diverse populations.
- Focus on youth and young adults; develop a planning task force for young adult ministry.
- Provide a safe space for those who are drawn to engage with the Christian faith and the Episcopal/Anglican tradition.
- Continue to support the concert series as well as drama and other arts offerings. Explore partnerships with Gage and other arts organizations, including our resident artists program.

STEWARDSHIP

- Complete and celebrate the first phase of the Living Stones Capital Campaign and celebrate completion of the first phase. Begin planning for future capital campaign phases.
- Diversify revenue and income streams.
- Explore and expand new and different Christ-centered stewardship models to grow and sustain the pledge base.
- Continue collaboration and planning efforts with the Cathedral Foundation, including the development of a Planned Giving Ministry. Encourage legacy gift participation.
- Hire development staff or explore methods for obtaining expert and strategic development assistance.

- Revisit stewardship model and explore methods to identify and recognize *all* contributions, both financial and non-financial.

COMMUNICATIONS

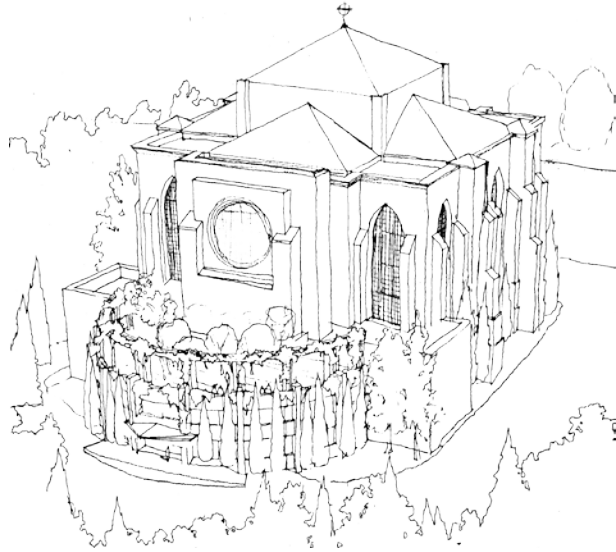
- Develop a communications strategy and tell our story more effectively to broader audiences.
- Facilitate communications between ministries, with the St. Mark's community as a whole, and with the Diocese and the broader community.
- Establish relationships with local and community press and media outlets.
- Continue growing social media presence and search optimization.
- Continue to improve the website and calendar functions.
- Develop a more inclusive database.
- Implement live streaming for services, Diocesan events, and other community offerings.
- Explore improved IT and web support.

HOSPITALITY

- Continue to greet visitors and members before all services. Answer questions and share information about how to become involved in the St. Mark's community.
- Continue the welcoming/hospitality/many social opportunities for the whole community.
- Explore ways to more fully integrate new members and families into ministry involvement and leadership.
- Discuss transportation needs and brainstorm potential solutions.
- Celebrate community milestones and achievements.
- Explore improving the space for coffee hour and socializing.
- Continue the "front door ministry" of the Cathedral Shop.

PASTORAL CARE

- Continue and expand on- and off-campus pastoral care offerings, including the Chaplain of the Week and Lay Chaplains in Community.
- Continue extending support and pastoral care for life events such as weddings, funerals, illnesses, and other events.
- Continue offering pastoral care training, including Safeguarding God's Children and Safeguarding God's People.
- Develop new lay pastoral care leaders and chaplains. Consider other models of pastoral care.



FINANCE

- Continue with strong financial controls and procedures.
- Continue to communicate financial information regularly to the congregation.
- Recruit and welcome new committee members with financial expertise
- Diversify revenue and income streams.

FACILITIES

- Complete Phase One of the Nave Construction project in 2017.
- Provide regular communications and updates to all ministries and groups during the construction phase.
- Complete the St. Mark's 2030 mid-range strategic plan. Begin conversation about how to live into the St. Nicholas building and other campus development.
- Continue addressing the deferred maintenance list.
- Hire more facilities staff.
- Repair or replace pews; explore the idea of Cathedral seating.
- Revisit and review Cathedral signage post-construction.
- Continue methods for improving our physical plant, including sustainability, the sound system, and other ongoing issues.

Appendix:

Renewing Our Covenant: A Statement of Commitment and Action Saint Mark's Cathedral Parish

Saint Mark's Cathedral Parish reaffirms its commitment to respect the dignity of every human being, strive for justice and peace among all people, and seek and serve Christ in all persons. We are concerned about the increase in statements and actions in our nation that target particular groups of people based on their skin color, their religious affiliation, their gender or orientation, their disabilities, or their country of birth. These are artificial divisions that we vehemently denounce as discriminatory and disrespectful. We believe our nation can do better, and we pledge to work toward that better vision here and now. We commit to being a network of activists, in God's name, joining others who similarly pledge to actively pursue justice. Here's how we will engage this work:

1. We will go deeper in faith.

We commit to read, study, and live the words of Jesus. The prophet Micah's words provide a mantra for us as people of faith: "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God." We must seek both courage and humility as we respond.

2. We will listen.

We will listen to those with whom we may disagree as we seek safe and sacred spaces for hearing each other's stories, pains, fears, and hopes. We will foster such dialogue so that our children might learn the meaning of the diversity and pluralism that is America's best future.

3. We will lift up truth.

We will strive to replace fear with facts when it comes to public discussions about immigrants, refugees, Muslims, racial diversity, and national security. Our times require a moral compass, and truth-telling is an important part of this.

4. We will reject White Nationalism.

We will name racism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia as sins. We believe all people are made in God's image, and we affirm diversity as a gift, blessing, and opportunity for our nation.

5. We will love our neighbors by protecting them from hate speech and attacks.

We will identify, report, and confront hate speech and behavior — against all ethnic and religious groups, women, LGBTQ people, immigrants, people with disabilities, and all marginalized groups. Our church stands as a sanctuary and safe haven for people threatened by those who would attack them.

6. We will welcome the stranger, as our Scriptures instruct.

We will advocate for immigrants and their families, and we will block, interfere, and obstruct the mass deportations of immigrants who are members of our communities.

7. We will expose and oppose racial profiling in policing.

We will join with other local faith communities in monitoring the relationship of our police to our communities, calling out racial injustice when we see it.

8. We will defend religious liberty.

We embrace Muslims as fellow Americans and stand with our local mosques in congregational solidarity. We will denounce the defamation and banning of Muslims, and will seek to disrupt any attempt to require registration of Muslims.

9. We will work to end misogyny that enables sexism and a culture of sexual violence.

We will work to replace misogyny with mutual respect. We will name sexual assault for what it is—a sin and a crime. Gender fairness and equality must be fundamental principles in our workplaces, schools, and political systems.

10. We will fight for climate justice and protection of our environment.

As stewards of our land, air and water, we will stand with others in broad coalition to preserve these precious resources while working to reverse the troubling trends of human-caused climate change.

11. We will protest with our best values.

We will defend constitutional values and workplace fairness, striving to respect the dignity of every human being. Whether in our streets, with our schools or in our workplaces — we will protest with dignity, discipline, and non-violence, not with hate for hate.

12. We make these commitments to you, and with you.

The days and weeks and years ahead will surely require much of us. Saint Mark's Cathedral will be here to provide sustenance for the journey, resources for learning, safe space for dialogue, and opportunities for prayerful resistance and action. Join us as we engage this work, as community, in God's name.

*Adopted unanimously by the Vestry of Saint Mark's Cathedral Parish
Seattle, Washington
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